

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-45. Canceled.

46. (Original) A hot-fillable plastic container, comprising:

a body portion having a top portion and a bottom portion,

the top portion including a grip portion inwardly recessed at least 5 mm into the body portion and a grip edge provided along at least an upper side of the grip portion due to inward recessing of the grip portion, wherein the grip edge forms a transition between the recessed grip portion and a non-recessed wall portion of the top portion of the body portion adjacent the grip portion, the grip portion being designed to accommodate at least a portion of internal forces tending to collapse the container inwardly due to filling of the container with a liquid at an elevated temperature and subsequent cooling of the liquid,

the bottom portion including a base portion and a plurality of vacuum panels designed to accommodate at least a portion of said internal forces, said plurality of vacuum panels having a deformation capability that is different than a deformation capability of the grip portions.

47. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, further comprising a plurality of lateral ribs positioned within each of the vacuum panels.

48. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, further comprising at least one lateral rib provided on the top portion of the body portion and on a sidewall of the container that is laterally adjacent each said grip portion.

49. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the deformation capability of the grip portions is less than the deformation capability of the vacuum panels.

50. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the container is substantially rectangular and defines two longer sides and two shorter sides, each of the longer sides having one said grip portion, and each of the shorter sides including at least one horizontal rib provided on the top portion of the body portion and laterally adjacent each said grip portion.

51. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, further comprising a waist portion that extends into the body portion, the grip portion being provided laterally adjacent the waist portion.

52. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 51, further comprising at least one lateral rib provided in the waist portion.

53. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the grip portion is positioned substantially along a center of gravity of the body portion.

54. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein at least one said grip portion defines an integral logo portion having a logo.

55. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 54, wherein the logo includes raised lettering.

56. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 54, wherein the logo includes recessed lettering.

57. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 54, wherein the logo portion has a height that is about one quarter to about one-half of a height of the top portion.

58. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the bottom portion includes structure to accommodate a wrap-around label.

59. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the grip portion defines a logo portion adapted to receive an auxiliary label.

60. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the grip edge substantially circumscribes the grip portion.

61. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein a cross-sectional shape of the body portion and the base portion is substantially rectangular along substantially an entire axial extent thereof.

62. (Original) The hot-fillable plastic container according to claim 46, wherein a center of gravity of the container is positioned in a region of the body portion spanning a transition between the top and the bottom portions.

63. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the vacuum panels are positioned above the base portion.

64. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 46, wherein the container includes one said grip portion on opposed side walls of the top portion, a capacity of the container is about 64 ounces, the bottom portion includes structure to accommodate a wrap around label, and each said grip portion includes a recessed design in the form of a logo.

65. (Original) A hot-fillable plastic container comprising:
a top portion including an inwardly depressed grip portion and a waist portion that extends into the top portion; and
a bottom portion integrally formed with the top portion, the bottom portion including a base portion and a plurality of force accommodation portions to accommodate internal forces tending to collapse the container due to filling of the container with a liquid at an elevated temperature and subsequent cooling of the liquid,
wherein the grip portion is designed to accommodate for at least a portion of the internal forces, and
wherein a cross-sectional shape of the top and bottom portions of the container is substantially rectangular along substantially an entire axial extent thereof, and the top portion of

the container defines relatively longer opposed sides, each having at least one said grip portion, and relatively shorter sides each having at least one said waist portion.

66. (Original) A hot-fillable PET plastic container, comprising:

a body portion having a top portion and a bottom portion each defining a pair of opposed relatively longer walls and a pair of opposed relatively shorter walls, the body portion including corner portions connecting the relatively longer and shorter walls,

the top portion including a pair of opposed grip portions each inwardly recessed at least 2 mm with respect to the relatively longer walls of the top portion, each said grip portion having a grip edge provided along at least a portion of a perimeter of each grip portion due to inward recessing of the grip portions, wherein:

each said grip edge forms a transition between each said recessed grip portion and at least one non-recessed wall portion of the top portion adjacent the grip portion, and

the bottom portion includes a base portion and a plurality of internal force accommodation portions, the base portion including a pair of opposed relatively shorter sides and a pair of opposed relatively longer sides corresponding, respectively, to the relatively shorter and longer walls of the body portion, each of the accommodation portions being structured to accommodate internal forces tending to collapse the container inwardly due to filling of the container with a liquid at an elevated temperature and subsequent cooling of the liquid, wherein:

the bottom portion includes structure to receive a wrap-around label positioned above the base portion and below the top portion to cover the longer and shorter walls in the bottom portion.

67. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 66, wherein each of the grip portions is designed to accommodate for at least a portion of said internal forces, said grip portions having a deformation capacity that is less than a deformation capacity of the accommodation portions in the bottom portion.

68. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 66, wherein the body portion defines a center of gravity in a region along a transition between the top and bottom portions, and each of the grip portions at least partially coincides with the center of gravity of the body portion.

69. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 66, wherein a cross-sectional shape of at least the body portion is substantially rectangular along an entire axial extent thereof.

70. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 66, wherein each said grip portion is recessed about 2-10 mm into the top portion.

71. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 66, wherein each said grip portion is recessed more than 5 mm into the top portion.

72. (Original) The hot-fillable container according to claim 66, wherein a distance between the grip portions is about 75-90 mm.

73-77. Canceled.

78. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, further comprising a grip edge that partially circumscribes the grip portion.

79. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, wherein a center of gravity of the container is positioned in a region of the body portion spanning a transition between the top and the bottom portions.

80. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, wherein the accommodation portions are positioned above the base portion.

81. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 80, wherein the accommodation portions include at least two opposed vacuum panels each including at least four horizontal strengthening ribs.

82. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, wherein each said grip portion is inwardly recessed at least 5 mm.

83. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, wherein each of the larger and shorter walls of the bottom portion includes at least one said accommodation portion.

84. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, wherein each grip portion is centrally located within the longer walls of the top portion, so that the container is gripable from the direction of either of the shorter walls.

85. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, wherein each grip portion includes a grip edge structured to help prevent inadvertent slipping when the container is held upright and when liquid contents are dispensed.

86. (Currently Amended) The hot-fillable container according to claim ~~76~~104, wherein the container is filled with about 64 ounces of liquid contents.

87. (Previously Presented) A hot-fillable PET plastic container, comprising:
a body portion having a top portion and a bottom portion each defining a pair of opposed relatively longer walls and a pair of opposed relatively shorter walls, the body portion including corner portions connecting the relatively longer and shorter walls,
the top portion including a pair of opposed grip portions each inwardly recessed at least 2 mm with respect to the relatively longer walls of the top portion, each said grip portion having a grip edge provided along at least curved upper and lower portions of each grip portion due to inward recessing of the grip portions, wherein:

each said grip edge forms a transition between each said recessed grip portion and at least one non-recessed wall portion of the top portion adjacent the grip portion, and

the bottom portion includes a base portion and a plurality of internal force accommodation portions, the base portion including a pair of opposed relatively shorter sides and

a pair of opposed relatively longer sides corresponding, respectively, to the relatively shorter and longer walls of the body portion, each of the accommodation portions being structured to accommodate internal forces tending to collapse the container inwardly due to filling of the container with a liquid at an elevated temperature and subsequent cooling of the liquid, wherein:

the bottom portion includes structure to receive a wrap-around label positioned above the base portion and below the top portion to cover the longer and shorter walls in the bottom portion.

88. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein each of the grip portions is designed to accommodate for at least a portion of said internal forces, said grip portions having a deformation capacity that is less than a deformation capacity of the accommodation portions in the bottom portion.

89. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein the body portion defines a center of gravity in a region along a transition between the top and bottom portions, and each of the grip portions is closely adjacent or partially coincides with the center of gravity of the body portion.

90. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein a cross-sectional shape of at least the body portion is substantially rectangular along an entire axial extent thereof.

91. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein each said grip portion is recessed about 2-10 mm into the top portion.

92. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein each said grip portion is recessed more than 5 mm into the top portion.

93. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein the structure to receive a wrap-around label includes upper and lower label bumpers, and wherein a height (B) between the upper and lower label bumpers is less than a height (E) between the upper label bumper and the base of the neck portion of the container.

94. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, further comprising at least one recessed waist portion provided to each of the relatively shorter walls of the top portion of the body portion, laterally adjacent the grip portions.

95. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein each said grip portion includes an anti-slip surface.

96. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein each of the force accommodation portions in the relatively longer walls of bottom portion includes at least three strengthening ribs.

97. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein each of the relatively shorter walls of the bottom portion includes one said force accommodation portion.

98. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, further comprising a wrap-around label.

99. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, further comprising a raised letter molded logo positioned in the relatively longer walls of the top portion of the body portion.

100. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein a distance between the grip portions is about 75-90 mm.

101. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein a width of each of the relatively longer walls is about 115 mm.

102. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein a height of the container is about 260 mm.

103. (Previously Presented) The hot-fillable container according to claim 87, wherein a capacity of the container is about 64 ounces.

104. (New) A hot-fillable PET plastic container, comprising:

a body portion having a top portion and a bottom portion each defining a pair of opposed relatively longer walls and a pair of opposed relatively shorter walls, the body portion including corner portions connecting the relatively longer and shorter walls,

the top portion including a pair of opposed grip portions each inwardly recessed at least 2 mm with respect to the relatively longer walls of the top portion, wherein each said grip portion has a height that is about one quarter to about one-half of a height of the top portion,

the bottom portion including a base and a plurality of internal force accommodation portions, each of the accommodation portions being structured to accommodate internal forces tending to collapse the container inwardly due to filling of the container with a liquid at an elevated temperature and subsequent cooling of the liquid, wherein:

the bottom portion includes structure to receive and position a wrap-around label,
each of the two relatively shorter walls in the top portion includes a waist portion,
each grip portion has a height that is about one quarter to about one-half of a height of the top portion,

a capacity of the container is about 64 ounces, and

each grip portion defines a molded logo portion including raised or depressed lettering.

105. (New) The hot-fillable container according to claim 104, wherein a cross-sectional shape of the body portion and the base portion is substantially rectangular along substantially an entire axial extent thereof.